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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2443

Jan. 12, 1989

WHAT'S GOOD FOR AMERICA -- President George Bush, speaking to the American Farm Bureau in Orlando, Fla., Jan. 8, said the farm bill, our international trade negotiations and a capital gains tax cut will be high on his agenda for the nation. "Because," Bush said, "what's good for agriculture is good for America."

Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter told Farm Bureau members the 1990 Farm Bill needs to be finished by early fall and the GATT negotiations are scheduled to reach a conclusion in December. Yeutter said the administration will have it's 1990 Farm Bill ready to present to Congress in early February. Contact: Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623.

AG COLLEGES STEADY -- The demand for ag graduates from the nation's colleges remains strong and enrollments are up, says John Patrick Jordon, administrator of USDA's Cooperative State Research Service. Careers range from the traditional agronomy, ag economics, horticulture and animal sciences to newer programs in food science, turf grass management and landscape design. Jordan says the opportunities are exciting. "The enrollment turnabout being reported in the last two years indicates that college students are recognizing this fact in greater numbers," Jordon says. Contact: Pat Casula (202) 447-7854.

THE U.S. FARM SECTOR demonstrated in 1988 it has the vigor to weather a powerful storm. By some measures, its financial condition improved during the year, despite the worst drought in half a century. "Overall, farm financial performance continued to improve in 1988, as it had in 1986 and 1987," says USDA Economist Mitch Morehart. Farm receipts were up nearly 9 percent in 1988 to a total of \$151.5 billion. Source: Farmline/December 1989-1990. Contact: Mitch Morehart (202) 786-1801.

ARE YOU COMFORTABLY INTO THE BIG NINE - 0? The new decade is here. To help you adjust and keep pace with finances, federal benefits changes and the latest in government health & medical research, the Consumer Information Center offers its new winter edition of the Consumer Information Catalog. It can help you get about 200 free or low-priced federal publications. For more info, call: Mike Gill (202) 556-1794.

GROUND COVERS MAKE INTERESTING PLANTINGS -- Ground cover plantings can add interesting contrasts in texture and color to the home landscape. "Not only are these materials an asset to the beauty of your grounds, they can reduce maintenance problems," says Horticulturist Tom Pope of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service. Pope divides ground covers into two categories: living materials such as ivies, daylilies and honeysuckle and non-living materials such as gravel and rocks. Contact: Thomas Pope (504) 388-4141.

PEACH AROMA -- A peach's sweet smell comes from the right mix of five natural chemicals, USDA scientists say. "We identified five specific compounds from tree-ripened fruit that, mixed together in the right quantities, are essential to create what our smell panelists call 'the peach aroma,'" USDA Chemist Robert J. Horvat says. Contact: Robert Horvat (404) 546-3319.

HOW TO KEEP WARM -- We're all faced with the challenge of keeping warm and we probably all know clothing acts as a protective barrier. But its efficiency varies according to the insulation value, garment design, whether it's soiled or clean, or whether it's wet or dry, says Charlotte W. Cross, clothing specialist at the University of New Hampshire. "Thermal underwear makes you comfortable by keeping warm air close to your body in the spaces between the fibers," she says. Contact: Holly Y. Ayer (603) 862-1498.

NELSEN NAMED FNS ADMINISTRATOR -- Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter has named Betty Jo Nelsen, a ten-year veteran of the Wisconsin Assembly, as administrator of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service. Nelsen was elected to the Wisconsin Assembly in a special election in 1979 and has been reelected biennially since. She received a bachelor's degree in education with a major in food and nutrition from Massachusetts State College, Framingham.

USDA'S TV NEWS SERVICE changed last year, in response to requests from farm broadcasters for actualities and short, produced news features, Lynn Wyvill says. During 1989, USDA TV aired 599 actualities and 151 feature stories. In addition, USDA TV provided coverage of ten special news events -- including Secretary Clayton Yeutter's confirmation and swearing-in, radio news conferences with Sec. Yeutter and President George Bush and Sec. Yeutter's speeches and news conferences. Also, we have moved USDA News & Features to the beginning of each satellite transmission. Ag Update will follow USDA News & Features on the weeks it is sent. Contact: Lynn Wyvill (202) 447-4330.

GLOSSARY OF FOOD & AG POLICY TERMS -- USDA has just published "A Glossary of Food & Ag Policy Terms, 1989." The glossary is designed to be a practical guide to the terms associated with food and ag policy. These policies cover agricultural commodities, international trade & development, domestic & international food assistance and conservation. The glossary includes program descriptions, terms used in implementing the programs and the federal agencies involved. For a copy, call: Marci Hilt (202) 447-6445. Media only, please.

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1701 -- This year Congress tackles a new farm bill. Brenda Curtis reports on the president's position on farm policy & talks with a USDA economist about the upcoming farm bill debate. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 min. documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1183 -- Feeding the birds; the right bird feed; the right bird feeder; changing careers; quality day care. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 - 3 min. consumer features.)

AGRITAPE #1690 -- USDA News Highlights; the year of the farm bill; advance deficiency payment rates announced; 1990 rice program; processed mushrooms. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1302 -- Hemoglobin from cattle; aphid-resistant wheat; wheat aphid biocontrol; tomato taste aroma; improving fresh tomatoes. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Fri., Jan. 19, non-citrus fruits & nuts, turkeys; Mon., Jan. 22, dairy situation, U.S. ag trade update; Tues., Jan. 23, crop yields; Wed., Jan. 24, catfish, cattle on feed, livestock slaughter, livestock & poultry; Mon., Jan. 29, peanut stocks & processing.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m. EST each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

NEWS SERVICE -- Highlights of speeches by President George Bush, Sec. Yeutter & U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills at the 71st annual meeting of the American Farm Bureau Federation, Orlando, Fla; USDA Chief Meteorologist Norton Strommen on global weather patterns & USDA Economist Greg Gajewski on the long-term ag outlook.

FEATURES -- Pat O'Leary reports on USDA's annual conservation awards tour; Will Pemble reports on the labor saving blackberry harvester; Michigan State University's Lisa Telder has the story on winter pet care; University of Illinois' Gary Beaumont reports on renewed interest in hedgerows; & University of Missouri's Mike Thomas reports on some of Missouri's biotechnology research.

UPCOMING FEATURES: Computers on the farm, degradable plastics, Georgia bananas & a "Who's Who" for dairy cattle.

Available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY 7:30-7:45 p.m., EST, Transponder 12D
SATURDAY 10:30-11:15 a.m., EST, Transponder 10D
MONDAY 8:30-9:15 a.m., EST, Transponder 12D
(Repeat of Saturday transmission)

OFFMIKE

LAKE...levels are down four feet and dropping, says Emery Kleven (KDHL, Faribault, Minn.). Rain and snow storms are passing to the south, continuing a trend that began last summer. Says producers would not be disappointed if a two-foot blizzard visited the area. Substantial spring rains will be necessary for crop production this year.

STORMS...are tracking through Washington state. Bob Hoff (Northwest Ag News Net, Spokane, Wash.) says an early January system brought some rain but the 130-mph-winds were not much appreciated. Powerlines and trees were downed and snow removed from wheat. Snowpack in the mountains is less than normal. Bob says the apple industry continues to struggle with a number of elements that remain to be solved before financial health can return; including thousands of acres of new orchards, reduced income, production levies, perceptions. Outlook is good in his area for cattle and irrigated crops.

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UNLIKE...the drought of '89 that had spotty moisture patterns, this winter's dry conditions are more widespread, says Jim Coyle (KRES, Moberly, Mo.). Topsoil moisture statewide is 80 percent short. If '90 remains dry it will mark the third year of drought for southwest Iowa and northwest Missouri. Snow cover for wheat has been removed by wind and high temperatures, but Jim says its too early to determine if the crop is damaged.

THANKS...to Cindy and Chuck Zimmerman (Ind. Florida Agrinet, Ocala) for their help in sending material to USDA radio from the American Farm Bureau Federation annual meeting in Florida. Also, Cindy and Lynn Ketelsen (Linder Farm Network, Willmar, Minn.) were a great team hosting audiobridge feeds from Orlando.

CONGRATULATIONS...to Robin Kinney (Linder Farm Network), who was selected by the Minnesota Farm Bureau for its Communicator of the Year award.

VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division